

MEMORANDUM TO THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Review of Agency Dissents received on CIA publications

REFERENCE: DGI 3/2 Paragraph 5

ENCLOSURE: ONE Review of IAC Agency Dissents Published with CIA Estimates

1. The Reference defines the nature and purpose of dissents on publications advanced by the IAC agencies. Attention is invited particularly to paragraph b. of the reference:

"When a dissent is published, the recipient is, by implication, asked to disprove the view he finds convincing. Unless the dissent is clear-cut and based on an unresolvable difference of opinion concerning an issue of major importance, recipients may be confused rather than aided by it."

2. In making the enclosed study, OGI attempted to measure the dissents so far received against the terms of the Reference, judging how many seemed to comply with it and how many, to a greater or less degree, were not in accordance with its terms. In doing so, OGI had naturally to rely on its own judgment and is aware that the IAC agencies would disagree with its conclusions.

3. CIA has received formal dissents on 31 out of 161 Situation Reports and ONE Estimates so far published. State has dissented fifteen times, Navy twelve, Army six, and Air three. Six papers carry two dissents apiece; none received more than two. (On four CIA papers agencies were allowed to "comment," and although these comments are in effect dissents, they were not considered in the enclosed study.)

4. The attached review of dissents is divided according to those that were considered (a) unacceptable under the directive, (b) borderline, and (c) legitimate. There are seventeen in the first category, twelve in the second, and five in the last. The "legitimate" dissents show three for Navy, two for Army, and none for State or Air Force.

copy for OOPS

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ONE REVIEW OF IAC AGENCY DOCUMENTS PREPARED IN CIA REPORTS AND ESTIMATES

4. Inacceptable Dissents.

ONE 58-48 "Strategic Value to the USSR of the Conquest of Western Europe and the Near East (to Cairo) prior to 1950"

AIR FORCE dissented for four full pages on this eleven-page estimate. In order to get the full flavor of the essay contributed by the Air Force in lieu of a dissent, it would be necessary to read it entire.

ONE 58-48 arose out of various estimates by ad hoc committees concerning the imminence of war. The question had to be answered (assuming Soviet capability of overrunning Europe in a short time) whether or not the Soviets would consider it advantageous to do so. The draft of ONE 58-48 was the work of an ad hoc committee, and the Air Force representatives agreed to it. The "dissent" was wholly the work of the ultimate Air Force echelon. *policy?*

ONE 58-48 concludes that, on the whole, it would not be advantageous for the USSR to overrun Europe in the period of time involved. Air Force first states that the paper "actually goes further and attempts to strike a balance and to draw conclusions, and so indicates 'intent'." Having set up this unsupported hypothesis, Air Force builds upon it the further conclusion that "It ~~the paper~~ therefore is in a position to influence decisions. For this reason, the comments to follow include alternative conclusions which this Directorate considers more sound as a basis for decisions." In other words, the Air Force, having determined in its own mind what conclusions regarding policy the Policy Makers might arrive at on the basis of ONE 58-48, tells the Policy Makers the conclusions the Air Force thinks they ought to have drawn from it. *!!*

From this point, the Air Force goes on to a sort of philosophical essay on the subject of the Soviet Union and its meaning in modern times, and concludes, "We conclude, therefore, that the immediate disadvantages in the political, economic, scientific and military fields, that would accrue to the Soviets should they elect to adopt their capability of overrunning Western Europe and the Middle East prior to 1 January 1950, are not sufficiently firm or weighty to justify any relaxation of US preparations to prevent or to counter such action, and further that this conclusion should be made unmistakably clear to all US policy makers." Needless to say, ONE 58-48 has said nothing whatever about relaxation in preparations for war, nothing of the sort having been the subject of the paper.

ORE 48-49 "The Soviet Position in Approaching the CFE"

The STATE dissent was not a dissent at all and actually served to confuse the reader. It raised several irrelevant points based upon a distortion of the meaning of the paper and ended up with a position that, while stated in a different form, was not at variance with the conclusions of the paper itself.

ORE 69 "Possible Consequences of Communist Control of Greece in the Absence of UN Confirmation"

For a discussion of STATE and AIR dissents on this paper, which attacked the assumption furnished by the NSC rather than the paper, please see ORE's recent Report to the Director on the subject of IAC Cooperation with CIA, Tab C, Case 2, page 5.

*This was a
classic
"failure to
associate
with the
project!"*

ORE 60-48 "Threats to the Security of the United States"

The AIR FORCE dissent is not a divergent estimate submitted in contradiction to CIA's facts, reasoning, or conclusions; but is actually a refusal to make the estimate expressly required by the Secretary of Defense (NSC 20) and the National Security Council. It asserts that it is impossible to estimate the intentions of the USSR over a period of ten years (as required by the NSC). This statement must be read in conjunction with the Air Force contention, in relation to ORE 22-48, that whether the USSR intends to resort to war can be estimated for no more than sixty days in advance. It is evident that AIR conceives only of a sort of tactical military intelligence and has no conception of the long-term strategic and national policy intelligence required by a body such as the NSC in order to perform its statutory function.

In particular, the Air Force observes that during the course of ten years some unforeseen development may occur which would render invalid any previous estimate. This fact is obvious and perfectly understood by all concerned. It is not, however, a valid reason to deny to the NSC the best judgment available regarding the long-term prospects as of a given date, it being understood that this is not the last estimate to be made on the subject for the next ten years.

In general, the Air Force dissent reveals a certain naivete and is, in effect, an abdication of the intelligence function. It is not a dissent within the meaning of DCI 3/2.

The NAVY's "dissent" is mere editorial revision without substantive value. In the first case, it strikes out half a sentence in order to insert an idea already in the text ten lines further on. The (valid) point stricken out is simply lost. The point inserted is repetitious. In the second case, Navy's language merely dulls the point made in the text.

ORE 11-49 "The Caribbean Legion"

STATE's dissent is typical of those that ignore the subject of the paper dissented on. ORE 11-49 merely points that the so-called Caribbean Legion, negligible as it may be in terms of world armies, is a sufficient force in terms of military strengths in the Caribbean area to be an important factor in the foreign policies of the small countries concerned. State says that underlying economic and social conditions which ultimately made possible the formation of the Caribbean Legion are more important than the Legion is. This is quite likely true, but it is not the subject of ORE 11-49.

ORE 57-48 "Consequences of a Breakdown in Four-Power Negotiations on Germany"

NAVY's dissent reads as follows: "However, consideration might well be given to the effects of a planned evacuation on Western initiative instead of being subjected to the ignominy of withdrawing from an untenable position." Even without reference to the paper, it is evident that this does not constitute a dissent. Navy's "dissent," furthermore, if incorporated into the paper would have involved CIA in making a policy recommendation. If read in the light of point 4 in paragraph 3, page 2, and sentence 3 of paragraph 4 same page, the dissent appears to be meaningless, as the purpose of Navy's suggested addition seems to be covered by the two references when read in their proper context.

ORE 53 "The Current Situation In Spain"

STATE's "Dissent" says almost the same thing that the paper does: namely that although there are elements in opposition to Franco, none is strong enough to overthrow him, a condition which is likely to persist for some time. CIA would have been quite willing to append a footnote saying, "CIA agrees heartily with State's dissent which appears to second all statements made by CIA in its paper."

SR-11 "Spain"

The ARMY dissent is primarily a plea for closer relations with the Franco regime, with a view to including Spain in the Western European security system. The Army seems to have taken the opportunity to disseminate its views on what US relations with Spain ought to be, rather than to disagree with CIA's statements on the situation in Spain.

ORE 10-48 "Consequences of Certain Courses of Action with Respect to Greece"

ARMY's dissent in this case is a clear example in which an intelligence estimate has been determined by Departmental policy. For reasons quite unrelated to any estimate of the situation in Greece, the Department of the

Army was opposed to the commitment of US troops in that country. Its policy position was therefore to urge reliance upon US aid short of the commitment of troops for a solution of the Greek problem. For reasons given in the text and valid up to the defection of Tito, the CIA estimate was that this course of action offered no assurance of effective results. The Army dissent did not controvert the reasons given by CIA, but merely objected to a "general tone of extreme pessimism" attributed to specified passages in the paper. A differing Army position on these points was not expressly stated, the Army position being given only in terms of a policy conclusion: "The Intelligence Division....estimates that the situation....is not such as to lead to a conclusion that employment of United States tactical units would be required to achieve success" -- that is to say, "We estimate the situation to be whatever will justify the policy we advocate." The reader is still left in ignorance of the Army's actual estimate of the situation in Greece, as distinguished from its policy position.

ORE 17-49 "Strategic Importance of the Far East to the US and the USSR"

For a discussion of NAVY's dissent and STATE's post-publication dissent see the recent report to the Director on IAC Cooperation with CIA, Tab C, p. 1, Case 1.

ORE 40-49 "Consequences of Dutch Police Action in Indonesia"

In an item entitled "Dissent" the NAVY dissents with nothing, but proposes a rewriting of certain portions of the paper. Presumably the Navy preferred the new phraseology. Quotation of Navy's point (a) however, should be sufficient to illustrate how the "dissent" would certainly confuse a reader: "Page 1, paragraph 1, sixth line--delete 'and' after 'recovery'; seventh line--change period to comma and insert 'and it will weaken the influence of moderate Indonesians while strengthening the position of extremists and Communists'." Theoretically at least, ONI was calling upon the President of the United States to pore over page 1 changing periods to commas, while trying to find out what Navy was trying to say about Indonesia.

ORE 45-49 "Probable Developments in China"

STATE dissents on the ground that the paper "does not give adequate treatment to the implications of the anticipated desire of a Communist China for international recognition." State does not inform the reader why the treatment is inadequate or what would have represented adequacy. State says, however, that the "inadequate" treatments leads to "over-simplification" which is "unsatisfactory." What CIA actually did in the paper was to state the probability of a demand for recognition, assume three methods by which the US might deal with the demand, and attempt to anticipate the chief consequences of each. A much more "adequate treatment" would probably have led to a clear recommendation of policy.

ONE 44-48 "Prospects for Survival of the Republic of Korea"

NAVY's dissent is in two parts. (For part 2 see Section C, page 9 below.

The first complains that, because the paper is written in terms of US aid, it presents an optimistic view which is unwarranted. Instead, says Navy, the study should have been presented in terms of "basic conditions," the matter of aid to be given "supplementary consideration." Actually the CIA paper is based on the thesis (in no way attacked by ONI) that without US aid, prospects for South Korea's survival are nil. No optimism necessarily attaches to a view of the situation including US aid; it is only that without this assumption the subject would hardly be worth discussion.

ONE 6-48 "Consequences of Communist Accession to Power in Italy
by Legal Means"

NAVY's dissent reads as follows: "ONI is not prepared to underwrite the detailed speculative predictions derived from the assumption. The situation presented by such an assumption would be fluid and could eventually take one of many paths which at the present time cannot be clearly charted." This, of course, is another example of an apparent inability to understand the simple process of hypothetical reasoning. Obviously, the NSC in March 1948 wanted to know what would happen if the Communists won the Italian elections of 13 April, presumably in order to gauge how far the US would wish to go in attempting to influence the elections. In effect, what the Navy says is that it is impossible to make such an estimate because it might turn out to be wrong.

ONE 69-49 "Relative US Security in the European Mediterranean Area
and the Far East"

NAVY's "dissent" is merely an editorial rephrasing of four passages in the CIA estimate without substantive value. In the first case, Navy holds that CIA has made a policy recommendation, which it has not, having merely answered the question asked, the answer to which would of course have policy implications. The Navy's wording has the same meaning as CIA's, with the identical implication. The Navy has only omitted CIA's indication of the reason for its conclusion. This example is typical of the other three Navy revisions of CIA's wording.

The AIR FORCE dissent is addressed to an idea attributed to ONE 69-49, but not actually in that estimate, even by implication. In its original form, this dissent attributed to ONE 69-49 a passage quoted from ONE 72-49 (not yet published), and the dissent was developed as a dissent therefrom. This error has been corrected, but meanwhile the point had become an idea fixe, so that AFD has persisted in its irrelevant dissent. Actually, the position taken in ONE 69-49 is derived from ONE 17-49, in which AFD had concurred.

B. Borderline Dissents.

ORE 63 "Current Situation in French North Africa"

STATE dissents on the "cumulative effect" of the paper. This confuses the issue in the first instance because State, instead of dissenting on a point definitely made in the O-R, is differing in terms of its own subjective judgment of what the paper said.

ORE 9 "Succession to Power in the USSR"

It would be difficult to comment on STATE's dissent because the subject (as State itself points out) is highly speculative. CIA's main point, however, was that the immediate successor to Stalin would be Molotov. State does not dispute this point. Rather, State gives the reader the benefit of some of its own speculations on certain other contingencies involved. These do not differ materially from CIA's speculations.

SR-17 "Brazil"

STATE's dissent, as such, is legitimate. CIA has said in effect that Latin American countries lying beyond the effective zone of US predominance have more latitude for independent action than those lying within it. State denies this. State's dissent, however, probably did not represent an actual belief, but rather was derived from insistence on the part of the Policy Desk that statements like CIA's, however true, should not be allowed to circulate.

ORE 64 "Current Situation in France"

STATE's dissent is a borderline case. It comments seriatim on all six sections of the paper, differing on points in each, sometimes clearly (as in saying that General De Gaulle would rather than might take an authoritarian approach) sometimes less clearly (as in the statement that CIA's view is "unbalanced"). In any case, the reader would have to do a good deal of reading and comparing to find out what State did not like about CIA's treatment of the subject.

SR-9 "Chile"

The ARMY's dissent would have been entirely legitimate had Army been able to state that CIA had definitely characterized Chile as unimportant to US security. What Army does, however, is to disagree with "the idea implicit in several sections of the report that Chile is of little or no strategic importance to the United States." Actually, there was a disagreement between CIA and Army as to the relative importance to the US of Chilean copper and Chilean bases, but Army is relying on its own interpretation when it alleges that CIA has called Chile of "little or no" importance.

ORE 16/1 "Soviet Objectives in Latin America"

STATE's inability "to concur completely," while it indicates a genuine difference of opinion as to the mechanics and strength of Soviet influence in Latin America, is not really a legitimate substantive dissent. State, by rather vague comments on alleged CIA failure to distinguish between broad and purely tactical Communist objectives, criticizes CIA's logic in reaching conclusions, but takes no issue with the conclusions themselves as they appear in paragraphs 9 and 10.

ORE 8-48 "Peron and the Argentine Congressional Elections"

STATE's dissent might have been clear-cut in that it doubts CIA's conclusion that the results of the elections will be generally favorable to US interests. In stating its case, however, State maintains that an accurate forecast cannot be derived from the estimate unless a discussion is included of anti-US elements in Peron's party. State then continues to the conclusion that "the maintenance of a two-thirds majority by the Peronists Party will not inasmuch represent a development 'favorable'...to US interests." The "inasmuch" concept was State's. CIA's point was that since Peron has no reason not to continue to be generally cooperative, and since there is no opposition in Argentina strong enough to deter him, he is likely to continue cooperation. (What State had really done was to object because CIA had not specifically pointed to the fact that not all Peronists are pro-US. CIA might have done so and still arrived at the same estimate.)

ORE 9-48 "Cuban Political Trends"

STATE's dissent is probably the result of CIA's rather unfortunate wording in the summary, where political events in Cuba are stated as having a potentially "adverse effect on US security interests." What CIA was actually trying to point out was that even a small Caribbean nation, if it chooses to do so, can make diplomatic difficulties for the US, that Cuban politics are carried on in a rather peculiar way, and that as a result of possible groupings of political forces, Cuba might take an attitude embarrassing to some US interests. State insisted on a broad definition of the word "security" and maintained that CIA had greatly exaggerated Cuba's importance to US security. The criticism may have been justified; yet it was typical that State would write: "....the facts would not appear to justify the statement that United States security interests are in jeopardy in the coming election." The use of the word "jeopardy" puts a complexion on CIA's estimate which could not be justified from CIA's actual wording.

SH-11 "Spain"

Except for its final statement (which from its wording, appears to be a policy recommendation) the STATE dissent would seem to be honest, if hardly necessary.

ORE 14-49 "Emergency Capabilities of the German Railway Systems"

ARMY maintains that CIA should have used 1937 rather than 1932 statistics to substantiate its estimates. Although 1937 statistics were used extensively by CIA where appropriate, such figures would have been completely irrelevant to the paper's discussion of ~~existing~~ civilian railway traffic levels. CIA's reasons for selecting 1932 as a basis for this part of its analysis were explained at length in the paper (page 3). Army's dissent, however, does not make clear its specific criticism of this procedure and in fact suggests a failure even to comprehend the purpose of a substantial portion of the analysis.

ORE 44-49 "Estimate of the Yugoslav Regime's Ability to Resist Soviet Pressure during 1949"

STATE concurs in the estimate but not with the Appendix because the latter contains "figures which are not confirmed...some at variance with our estimates." The dissent, in other words, is on matters of fact which could presumably have been verified. Regardless of this aspect, however, State's comments, containing no reference to the figures in question, would seem to be of very little use.

NAVY concurs in everything except one paragraph which it believes discusses future US policy -- a matter over which Navy explains that it has no cognizance. What Navy called discussion of future policy seemed to CIA a mere attempt at prediction--namely that, assuming a Western desire to sustain Tito, military pressure on Tito from the East might eventually necessitate military help from the West.

C. Legitimate Dissents.

ORE 16/1 "Soviet Objectives in Latin America"

NAVY's dissent, though it contains irrelevancies in the form of suggested extra material that ONI would presumably have liked to see in the paper, is legitimate: CIA has said that in time of war, certain South American Communist groups could temporarily disrupt US supplies, principally of copper and sugar. ONI does not believe this.

ORE 65 "Venezuelan Elections of 14 December 1947"

ARMY's dissent is legitimate. CIA calls the winning party in the elections anti-Communist and pro-US. Army denies this.

ORE 50-48 "Probable Argentine Policy toward the US to 1952 and Its Effects on US Interests"

The NAVY's dissent is legitimate. It differs with two major CIA points (that Argentina would be a co-belligerent with the US in case of war and that this would on balance be an advantage to the US) and furnishes reasons for these beliefs.

ORE 3-49 "Consequences of US Troop Withdrawal from Korea in Spring, 1949"

ARMY's dissent is legitimate. CIA holds that maintenance of a small US force in South Korea would be necessary to continued integrity of that country. Army denies this.

ORE 44-48 "Prospects for Survival of the Republic of Korea"

The second part of Navy's dissent is legitimate. CIA has stated that prospects for international recognition of South Korea are good; Navy says they are not. (Notes shortly after publication of the paper, South Korea secured international recognition.)

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